

PM happy Samy and Subra have made up

By Zulkifli Talib and Wong Chun Wai

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that he is glad that MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu and his former deputy Datuk S. Subramaniam have been able to resolve their differences.

"I am very happy be-

cause it appears that they have reached an understanding. This good sign augurs well for the future of the MIC," he told newsmen when asked to comment on the reconciliation of the two men.

Dr Mahathir said that this would enable him to announce soon the two deputy ministers and parliamentary secretary

from the MIC.

He added that he had already received their names but declined to disclose who the MIC president had recommended.

Datuk Seri Samy Vellu said on Thursday that he and Datuk Subramaniam had set aside their differences. He said he would be nominating Datuk Subramaniam as deputy

president.

Since the announcement, there has been speculation that Datuk Subramaniam may be picked by Dr Mahathir to be deputy minister.

There is also talk that he could not be selected because he may be disqualified as he has apparently served two terms as a senator.

The controversy surfaced following various interpretations of the constitutional provision on the tenure of senators and how the date of their appointments should take effect.

Article 45 (3A) of the Federal Constitution states that a member of the Senate shall not hold office for more than two terms either continuously or otherwise.

Dr Mahathir, when asked, said he did not know whether Datuk Subramaniam had served two terms as a senator.

He said that if the terms were served before

the amendments to the Federal Constitution then he could still be appointed as a senator.

"I will have to study the legal implications," he said.

Datuk Subramaniam was appointed a senator in April 1979 after he was defeated for the Damansara parliamentary seat by DAP's V. David.

Datuk Subramaniam served for three years until 1982 when he contested the general election in Segamat and won.

The former MIC deputy president, when contacted today, said he served as a senator for less than three years. However, he did not say when his senatorship started.